



Being Good: A Short Introduction to Ethics

Simon Blackburn

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Writing with wit and elegance, Simon Blackburn tackles the basic questions of ethics in this lively book, highlighting the complications and troubling issues that spring from the very simple question of how we ought to live. Blackburn dissects the many common reasons for why we are skeptical about ethics. Drawing on examples from history, politics, religion and everyday personal experience, he shows how cynicism and self-consciousness can paralyze us into considering ethics a hopeless pursuit. He assures us that ethics is neither futile nor irrelevant, but an intimate part of the most important issues of living-of birth, death, happiness, desire, freedom, pleasure, and justice. Indeed, from moral dilemmas about abortion and euthanasia, to our obsession with personal rights, to our longing for a sense of meaning in life, our everyday struggles are rife with ethical issues. Blackburn distills the arguments of Hume, Kant and Aristotle down to their essences, to underscore the timeless relevance of our voice of conscience, the pitfalls of complacency, and our concerns about truth, knowledge and human progress.

Blackburn's rare combination of depth, rigor, and sparkling prose, along with his distinguished ranking among contemporary philosophers, mark *Being Good* as an important statement on our current disenchantment with ethics. It challenges us to take a more thoughtful reading of our ethical climate and to ponder more carefully our own standards of behavior.



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